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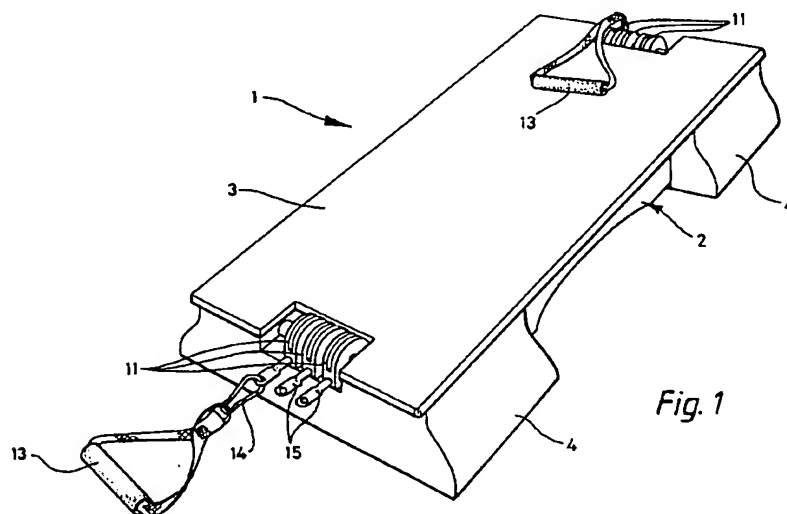
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Old Harlow, Essex(GB)(74) Representative: **Maguire, Peter Albert**
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St. Ives, Cambridge PE17 4BN(GB)(54) **Physical exercising apparatus.**

(57) Physical exercising apparatus comprises a ground-supported body (2), and a user platform (3) on the body and adapted to permit step-up exercise, and is characterised by at least one elongate elastic member (10), e.g. a bungee cord, means (8) attaching one end of the member (10) to the body, and a user handle (13) on the free end of the member (10) to enable a user to exercise by stretching the elastic member while supported at least in part on the

platform. Preferably several pairs of the elastic members (10), e.g. of different draw-weights are attached to the body (2) at opposite ends of the platform (3) and which are adapted to be used in the alternative or in combination to vary the effort expended by the user during exercise. Advantageously each elastic member is trained into a folded configuration below the platform whereby the effective length of each elastic member is increased.

*Fig. 1***EP 0 507 509 A2**

The invention relates to physical exercising apparatus.

It is known to provide a physical exercising apparatus in the form of a low ground-supported platform, commonly known as a step exerciser or stepper, which can be used for performing a variety of aerobic and anaerobic exercise.

It is an object of the invention to increase the versatility of such physical exercising apparatus while retaining its inherent virtues of simplicity, light weight and compactness, since these virtues enable the apparatus to be manufactured and sold inexpensively, promote portability of the apparatus and facilitate storage of the apparatus when not in use.

According to the invention, physical exercising apparatus comprises a ground-supported user platform adapted to permit step-up exercise and at least one elastic member one end of which is attached to the apparatus and the free end of which carries a user handle to enable a user to exercise by stretching the elastic member while supported at least in part on the platform.

Preferably the apparatus comprises a pair of elastic members disposed at opposite ends of the platform. If desired, several pairs of the elastic members may be provided and which are adapted to be used in the alternative or in combination to vary the effort which must be expended by the user during exercise. Preferably each pair of the elastic members will be of a different draw-weight. Thus a light draw-weight elastic member can be used for aerobic exercise while a heavy draw-weight elastic member can be used for anaerobic exercise. Usually, the elastic members will be in the form of bungee cords.

Preferably the elastic members are housed below the platform, and preferably they are trained over at least two pulleys or other guide members into a folded configuration whereby the effective length of each elastic member housed below the platform is increased to permit a range of extension sufficient to allow overhead exercise while standing on the platform. Preferably pulleys or other guide members are disposed at opposite ends of the platform for guiding the elastic members as they emerge from below the platform.

The user handle can be in any desired form e.g. a stirrup, a bar or a leg strap. When the handle is in the form of a bar it can be connected at its ends to the ends of a pair of elastic members so that the exerciser can be used to simulate weight training. Preferably the user handle will be readily detachable from the elastic member or members to enable alternative user handles to be attached.

Preferably the body of the apparatus will be constructed from plastics mouldings. If desired the mouldings may comprise a hollow cavity which can

be filled, prior to use of the apparatus, with water, sand or the like as ballast to improve the stability of the apparatus during use. Preferably however the apparatus will be stabilised by the user during use using his or her own body weight.

The invention is diagrammatically illustrated by way of example in the accompanying drawings, in which:-

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a step exerciser.

Figure 2 is a plan view of the exerciser of Figure 1.

Figure 3 is a sectional side elevation of the exerciser of figures 1 and 2 and

Figure 4 is an end elevation of the exerciser.

Figure 5 is a perspective view similar to that of Figure 1 but partially exploded, and showing how feet can be fitted to the step exerciser and how the feet can be stacked when not in use;

Figure 6 is a scrap perspective view of one set of final guide pulleys for the bungee cords;

Figure 7 is an exploded perspective view of the various components which make up the body of the step exerciser, and

Figures 8a to 8f are diagrams illustrating various exercises which can be performed using the step exerciser of the invention.

In the drawings a step exerciser 1 comprises a generally rectangular box-like enclosure or body 2, the upper surface 3 of which forms a horizontal platform or step, the body having ground engaging pedestals 4 at both ends. Preferably the body will be made from plastics injection mouldings as described more fully below with reference to Figure 7. As shown in Figure 5 the height of the exerciser may, if desired, be increased with the aid of spacer blocks or feet 5 which fit under the pedestals 4 in known fashion.

As indicated more clearly in Figure 3 of the drawings the interior 6 of the body is hollow and mounted therein are lower sets of pulleys 7 mounted in the pedestals 4 adjacent to the opposite ends of the body. The ends of each of a series of elastic bungee cords 10 are fixed to the pedestals by fasteners 8 and the cords are trained around the pulleys 7 disposed at the end of the body opposite to the respective fixings 8 and are then trained over final guides in the form of upper sets of pulleys 11 mounted in the pedestals 4 and located in apertures 12 at the opposite ends of the platform so that the free ends of the bungee cords 10 emerge from the ends of the platform. The free ends of the bungee cords are provided with terminations 15 formed with apertures which receive clips 14 by which the cords can be attached to user handles 13 such as stirrups, bars or ankle straps to enable a range of different exercises to be performed as indicated in Figures 8a to f. Each of the four sets of

pulleys 7 and 11 includes three co-axial pulley wheels. In the interests of clarity only one cord 10 (representative of a group of three such cords) is shown in Figure 3, but it will be appreciated that in practice, an oppositely disposed group of cords will be trained about the other pair of pulleys 7 and 11 to emerge at the left-hand end of the platform as shown in Figure 3.

As shown in the drawings groups of three bungee cords are provided at each end of the platform, each being of a different draw-weight to increase the versatility of the exerciser. Thus the cords may be used either singly or together by clipping the handle 13 to as many of the cords as desired.

As shown in Figure 6, the upper pulleys 11 capture the cords 10 in known fashion to prevent accidental displacement of the cords from the pulley systems during use.

Referring to Figure 7, the exerciser body is made from three main components, namely a moulding defining the upper portion including the platform 3 and two similar mouldings which form the pedestals 4. The platform moulding is formed on its underside with a parallel pair of longitudinally extending downwardly projecting stiffening flanges 16 which also serve the function of defining the box-like enclosure, the flanges being terminated at their vertical ends by cross flanges 17 adapted to fit in corresponding T-section slots 18 in the pedestals 4. The three mouldings can then be locked together by fasteners 19 e.g. self tapping screws which pass through bores in the platform 3 to engage the pedestals 4.

Each of the pedestals is generally U-shaped and is formed with opposite pairs of T-section slots 21 and 22 respectively which receive the ends of axle shafts 20 of the pulley sets 7 and 11 to mount the pulleys in position. The pulley axles 20 are prevented from moving along the slots 21 and 22 by T-shaped spacers or dowels 23 which fill the free space in the slots and are held in position by the lower surface of the platform moulding.

The invention thus provides a simple modification of a step-up exerciser which increases the versatility of such a device.

Claims

1. Physical exercising apparatus comprising a ground-supported body (2), and a user platform (3) on the body and adapted to permit step-up exercise, characterised by at least one elongate elastic member (10), means (8) attaching one end of the member (10) to the body, and a user handle (13) on the free end of the member (10) to enable a user to exercise by stretching the elastic member while

supported at least in part on the platform.

2. Physical exercising apparatus according to claim 1, characterised by a pair of the elastic members (10) attached to the body (2) at opposite ends of the platform (3).
3. Physical exercising apparatus according to claim 2, characterised by several pairs of the elastic members (10) attached to the body (2) at opposite ends of the platform (3) and which are adapted to be used in the alternative or in combination to vary the effort expended by the user during exercise.
4. Physical exercising apparatus according to claim 3, characterised in that each pair of the elastic members (10) is of a different draw-weight.
5. Physical exercising apparatus according to any preceding claim, characterised in that each elongate elastic member (10) is in the form of a bungee cord.
6. Physical exercising apparatus according to any preceding claim, characterised by means (6) housing at least a portion of each elongate elastic member (10) below the platform (3), the housing means comprising guides (7, 11) mounted on the body and over which each elastic member is trained into a folded configuration whereby the effective length of each elastic member is increased.
7. Physical exercising apparatus according to claim 6, characterised in that the housing means (6) comprises final guides (11) disposed on the body at opposite ends of the platform for guiding the elastic members where they emerge from below the platform.
8. Physical exercising apparatus according to any preceding claim, characterised in that the body (2) comprises an upper portion (3) defining the user platform and a pair of pedestals (4) attached to the upper portion at its opposite ends and on which the upper portion is supported, each elastic member (10) being secured to the pedestals and being trained over guides (7, 11) mounted on the pedestals.
9. Physical exercising apparatus according to claim 8, characterised in that the upper portion (3) is formed with downwardly projecting flanges (16) which define a box-like enclosure (6) in which the elastic members are housed, which flanges (16) are received in correspond-

ingly shaped slots (18) in the pedestals to lock the upper portion and pedestals together.

10. Physical exercising apparatus according to claim 9, characterised in that the guides (7, 11) are in the form of pulley wheels mounted on spindles (20) journaled slots (21, 22) in the pedestals.

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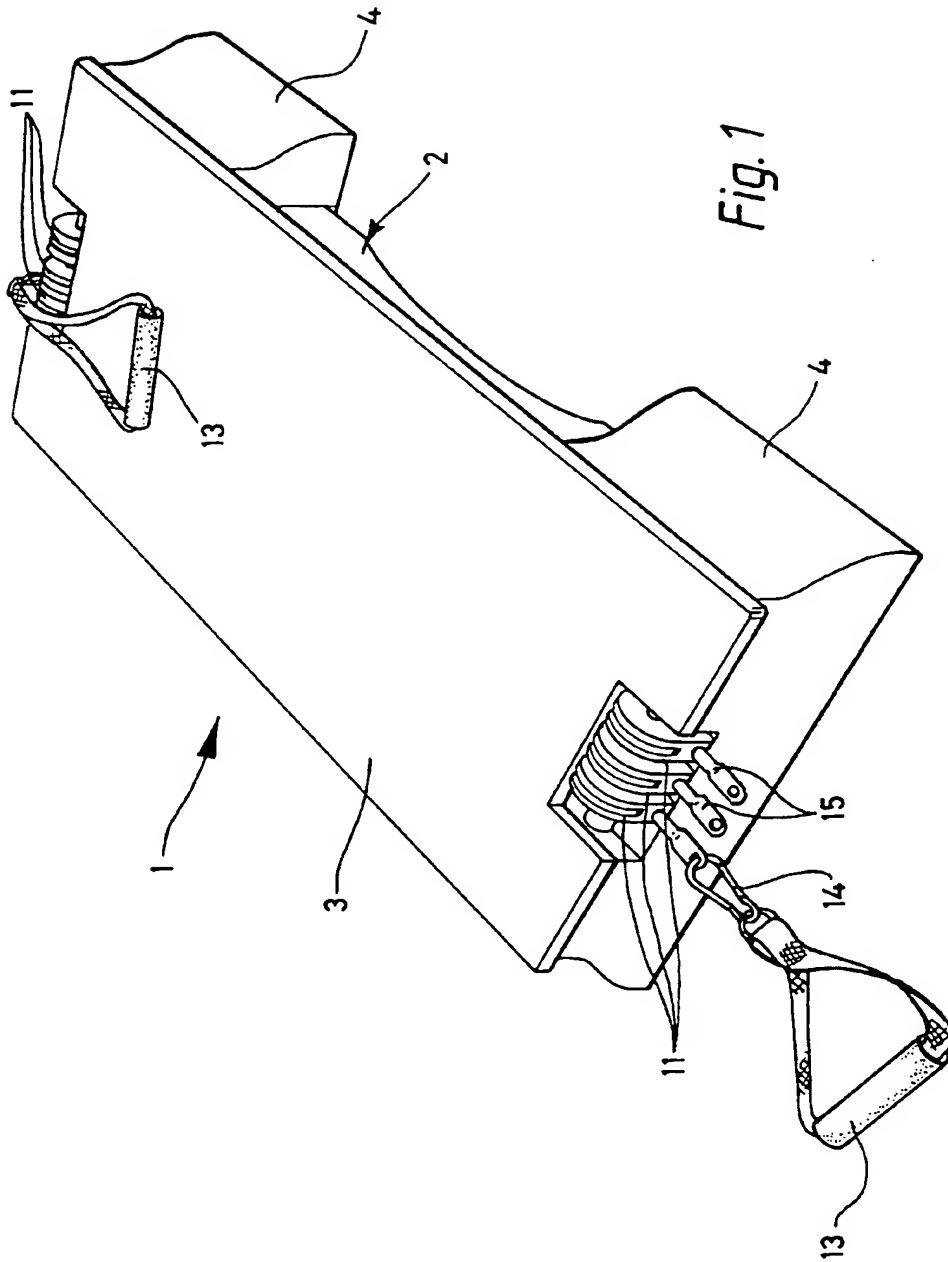
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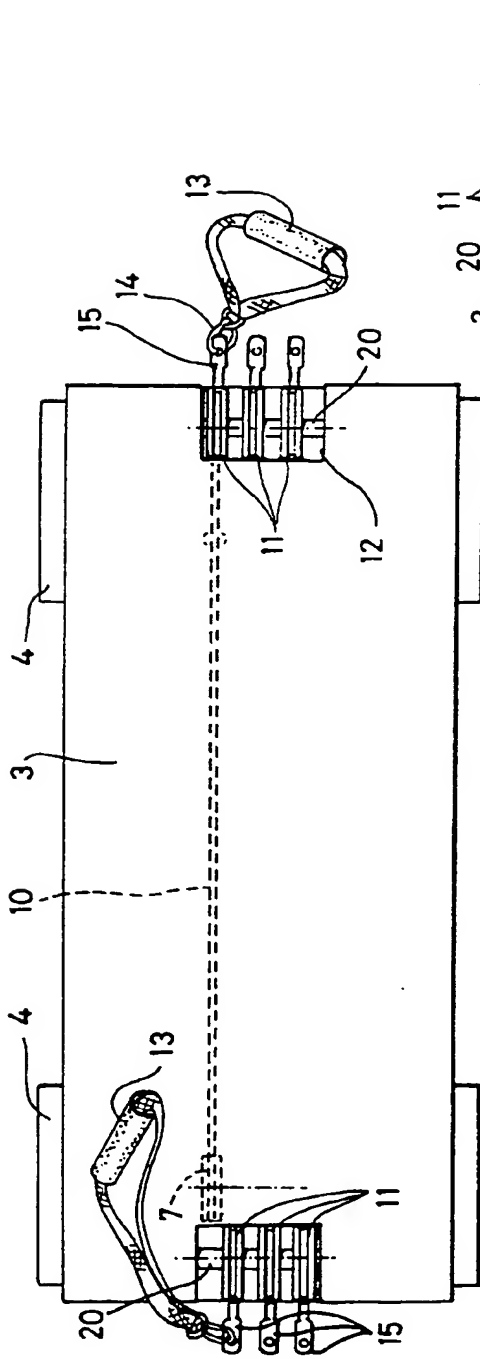


Fig. 2

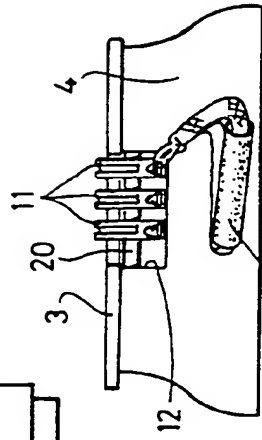


Fig. 4

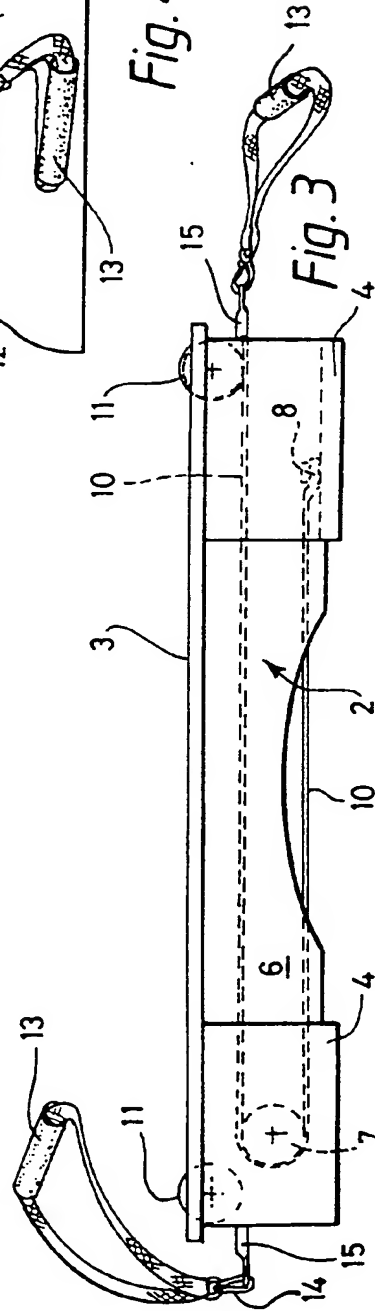


Fig. 3

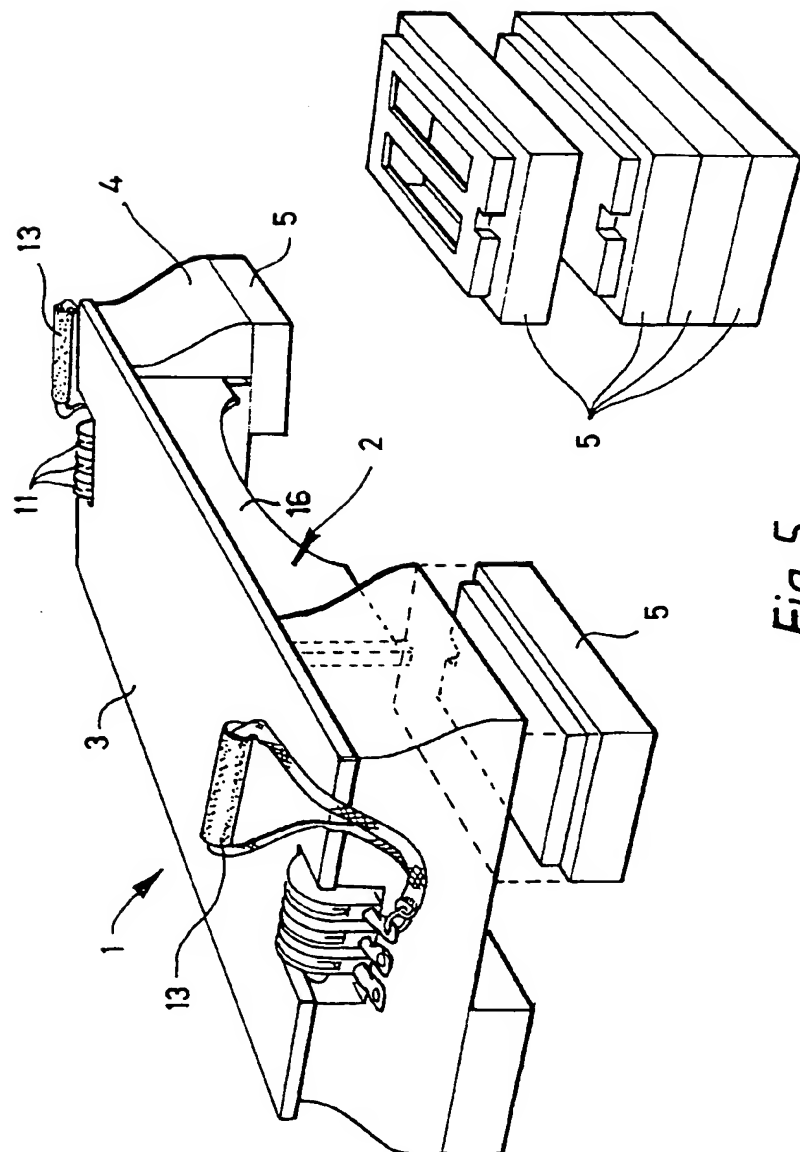


Fig. 5

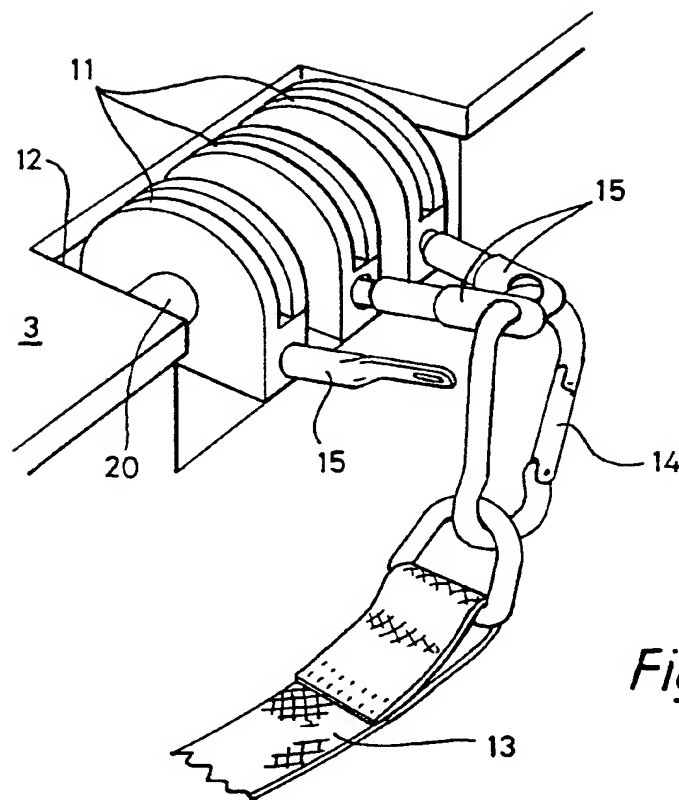


Fig. 6

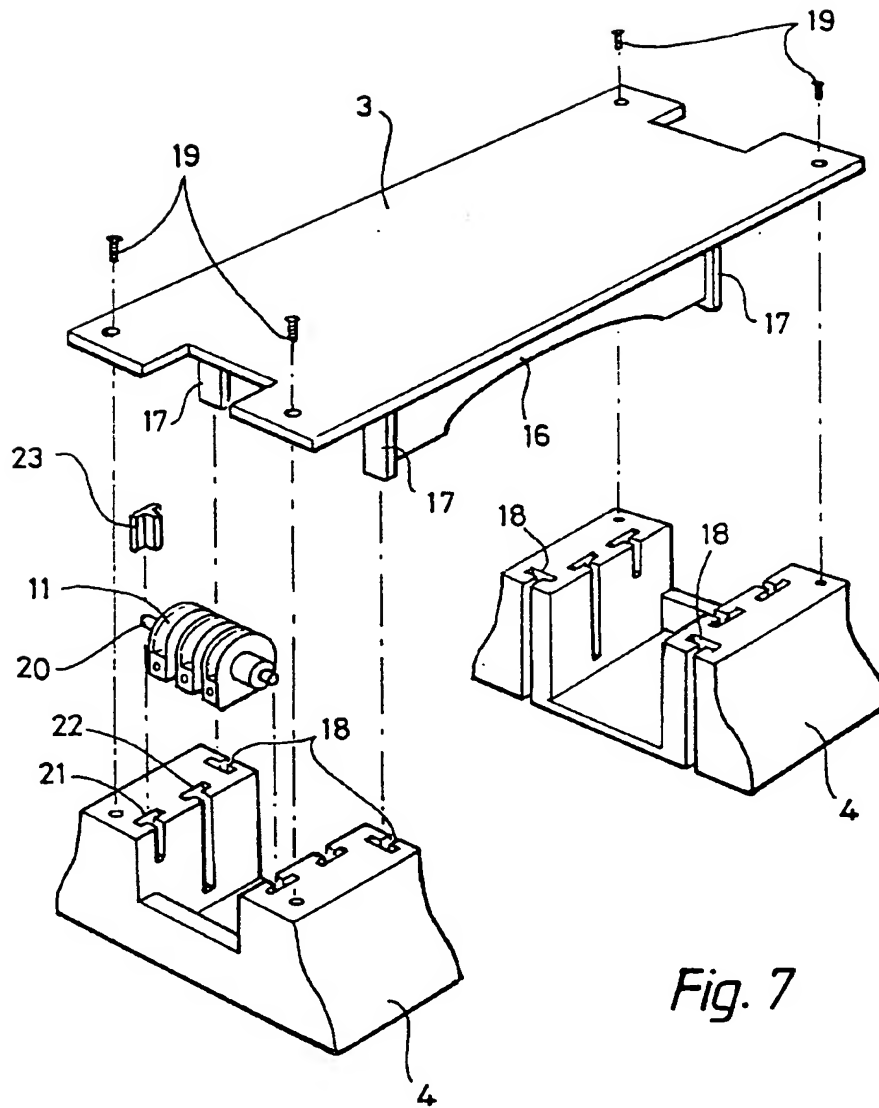


Fig. 7

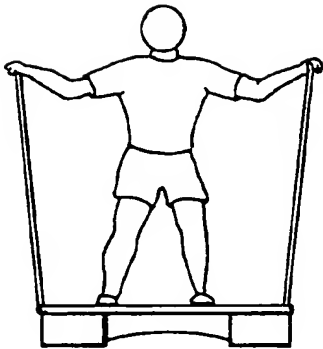


Fig. 8a

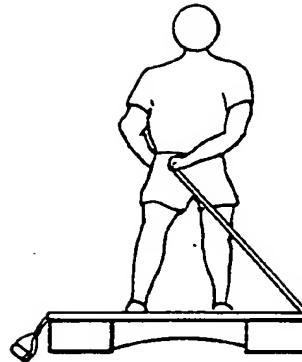


Fig. 8b

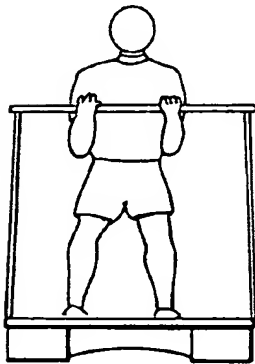


Fig. 8c

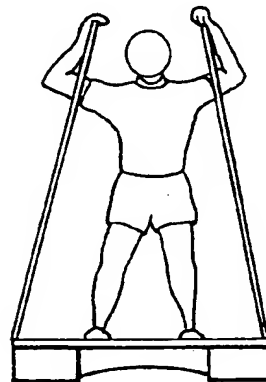


Fig. 8d

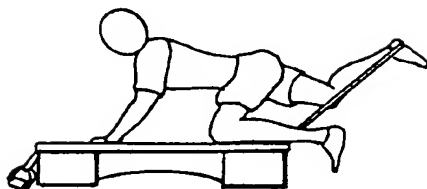


Fig. 8e

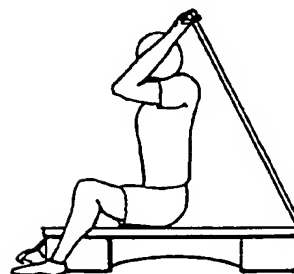


Fig. 8f